

A special meeting of the Bath Planning Board was called on 3-10-09 for the purpose of holding a public meeting to receive comments from members of the public with regard to the City of Bath Comprehensive Plan.

**PLANNING BOARD
MEMBERS PRESENT**

Bob Oxton, Chair
Amy Fitzpatrick
Paul Fraser
Carolyn Lockwood
Donald Rogers
Kean McDermott (non-voting student member)
Ashley McDougall (non-voting student member)

**PLANNING BOARD
MEMBERS ABSENT**

James Hopkinson, Vice Chair
Andy Omo

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN COMMITTEE
MEMBERS PRESENT**

Carole Johnson
Jackie Dwinal
Julia Couture
Ed Benedict

**CITY COUNCIL
MEMBER PRESENT**

Mari Eosco

STAFF PRESENT

Jim Upham, Planning Director
Marsha Hinton, Recording Secretary

Mr. Oxton, Chair, called the meeting to order in the second floor conference room at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, 2009.

Mr. Upham presented a visual presentation on the Comprehensive Plan planning process.

Mr. Upham stated that this plan was intended to be more action-oriented than the 1997 plan because, according to the final slide of the presentation, "The future of the City is not the result of choices taken amongst alternative paths or forks in the road. The future is a place that is created; first in the mind, then by actions. The future is not someplace we are going, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but to be made."

Mr. Upham described the process used to develop the Comprehensive Plan highlighting the development of actions to address identified City of Bath issues with actions appropriate to either resolve issues having negative impacts or enhance issues that have positive impacts on the City. Mr. Upham discussed the contents of the Comprehensive Plan beginning with the Appendix consisting of inventories of City demographics, economy, cultural and nongovernmental resources, housing, historic and archaeological resources, natural resources, transportation, public facilities and services, education, fiscal, regional coordination, and climate action plan. Mr. Upham pointed out planning implications are addressed in each inventory section.

Mr. Upham stated that the core of the Comprehensive Plan is contained in Chapters 1 – 5: Chapter 1 addressing the process used to arrive at the final document, Chapter 2 is the vision that was developed for the City of Bath, Chapter 3 contains an excellent history of the City of Bath written by Dr. Robin Haynes, Chapter 4 is the comprehensive, action plan, and Chapter 5

is the future land use plan. Mr. Upham informed the members of the public of the State law requirements and State goals for Comprehensive Plans and their development.

Mr. Upham then pointed out the various maps on the wall describing their purpose. Mr. Upham described the public facilities map, the public water and sewer service areas map, the sidewalk map, the Bath bus route map, the road classification map, the high crash location map, the historic resources map, the current use tax program parcel map, the growth and rural areas map, the important views map, the land in conservation map, the constraints to development map, the critical rural areas map, the critical waterfront areas map, the critical natural areas map, the future land use map, and the future land use overlay areas map.

Mr. Oxtan, Planning Board Chair, opened the floor to members of the public present who wished to comment on the City of Bath Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Paul Gamache, 1016 Washington Street, stated that there were three issues he wished to address as follows:

Development of a river walk starting from the train station and running up to the Coal Pocket;

Development of a cruise ship-friendly dock; and

Development of facilities that would attract high end mega yachts.

Mr. Gamache pointed out the benefits to the residents, the economic benefits to the City of Bath, and the attraction to visitors if these development items were implemented. Mr. Gamache informed the Planning Board of other communities who were benefiting from the successful development of walking/biking trails, cruise ship docks, and facilities for mega yachts. Mr. Gamache asked these development goals be included in the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Ed Benedict, 10 Garden Street, stated a trail system was indeed being pursued, but that a cruise ship dock and yacht facilities should certainly be addressed in the Comprehensive Plan so that they would be incorporated as part of the future land use of the City of Bath.

Mr. Upham stated that Mr. Gamache's comments were on point and thanked Mr. Gamache for his recommendations. Mr. Upham talked about the current work on development of a river walk in the very area Mr. Gamache had suggested. Mr. Upham also stated that the water front development of a cruise ship friendly dock and facilities for yachts are great ideas.

Carole Johnson, Comprehensive Plan Committee member, asked Mr. Upham about the sidewalk development on Washington Street.

Mr. Upham discussed the Washington Street sidewalk project, the various trails that exist in Bath, and the work initiated by the Kennebec Estuary Land Trust with regard to those trails.

Councilwoman Eosco asked about the Water Street project.

Mr. Upham described the project to make the appearance of Water Street more attractive by creating a vegetative edge.

Mr. Upham encouraged the citizens to go to the City of Bath's website www.cityofbath.com to review the Comprehensive Plan and make comments directly to him at jupham@cityofbath.com. Mr. Upham said that all comments and the response to those comments would be posted on the City website.

Mr. Upham described the Comprehensive Plan process from this point forward stating that next Tuesday, March 17, 2009, the Planning Board would be reviewing the comments from the community, that the Planning Board would make changes to the Plan as appropriate, then the Plan would be forwarded to the State Planning Office for review by a number of State departments, a public hearing process culminating in a workshop with the City Council, and finally adoption of the Comprehensive Plan by the City of Bath.

Mr. Upham thanked the members of the public who had participated in the development of the Comprehensive Plan, members of the Comprehensive Plan committee especially noting Jackie Dwinal and Dr. Robin Haynes, members of the Planning Board, and City Council members for their work on the Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Oxton added his thanks to those who have worked on the development of the Comprehensive Plan stating that the commitment required to work on this project demanded a deep love for the City of Bath. Mr. Oxton stated that those citizens who have worked on the Comprehensive Plan deserved the applause of the community.

There being no further business before the Board, Mr. Oxton, Chair, closed the public meeting at 6:58 PM.

Minutes prepared by Marsha Hinton, Recording Secretary